DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 306 471 CG 021 604

AUTHOR Buri, John R.
TITLE An Instrument for the Measurement of Parental Authority Prototypes.
PUB DATE May 89
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association (61st, Chicago, IL, May 4-6, 1989).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Authoritarianism; College Students; *Discipline; *Family Life; Higher Education; *Parent Child Relationship; Professional Personnel; Psychometrics; *Test Construction; Test Reliability; Test Validity
IDENTIFIERS *Authoritativeness; Parental Authority Questionnaire; *Permissiveness

ABSTRACT

Baumrind (1971) proposed three distinct patterns of parental authority (permissiveness, authoritarianism, and authoritativeness) and measured these parenting styles through interviews with parents and their children and through observations of parents interacting with their children. This study was undertaken to develop a readily-accessible, standardized measure of Baumrind's parental prototypes. Forty-eight questionnaire items were constructed based upon Baumrind's descriptions of the permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative prototypes. Items were stated from the perspective of an individual evaluating the patterns of authority exercised by his or her parents. Professionals (N=21) in the fields of psychology, social work, sociology, and education evaluated the accuracy of the items and accepted 36 of the items for the final pool of items. From this pool, 10 permissive, 10 authoritarian, and 10 authoritative items were retained for the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ). Two forms of the questionnaire were constructed to evaluate the parental authority of mothers and of fathers. Seven studies were conducted to test the PAQ's reliability, internal consistency, content-related validity, criterion-related validity, discriminant-related validity, and its correlations with the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. The results of these studies showed the PAQ to have highly respectable measures of reliability and validity. The PAQ should be useful for assessing the parental authority exercised by both mothers and fathers and it is appropriate for both females and males who are older adolescents or young adults. (The Parental Authority Questionnaire Pertaining to Fathers is included.) (NB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
John R. Buri
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED306471

CG 021604

An Instrument for the Measurement of Parental Authority Prototypes

John R. Buri

College of St. Thomas

ABSTRACT: *A questionnaire was developed for the purpose of measuring Baumrind's (1971) three prototypes of parental authority: permissiveness, authoritarianism, and authoritativeness. The questionnaire consists of 30 items and yields permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative scores for both the mother and the father. Psychometric measures support this scale as a valuable tool in the investigation of correlates of parental permissiveness, authoritarianism, and authoritativeness.*

How authority should be exercised in the home, how often it should be exercised, in what circumstances it should be exercised, and even whether it should be exercised have been discussed at great length and often with considerable conviction (e.g.,Baumrind, 1984; Dobson, 1970; Dorr, Zax, & Bonner, 1983; Farson, 1984; Gordon, 1975; Neill, 1977). One particular model of parental authority which has not been constrained by "authority-versus-no-authority" types of arguments is that of Baumrind (1971). Through her proposed distinct patterns of parental authority (i.e., permissiveness, authoritarianism, and authoritativeness), Baumrind has been able to inject considerable clarity into parental authority controversies. Baumrind has suggested

---

Paper presented at the 61st Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, May, 1989.

Correspondence concerning this paper should be sent to Dr. John R. Buri, Department of Psychology, P.O. Box 4026, College of St. Thomas, 2115 Summit Ave., St. Paul, MN. 55105.

that permissive parents tend to make fewer demands upon their children than do other parents, allowing them to regulate their own activities as much as possible. While being relatively warm toward their children, these permissive parents are noncontrolling and rarely use punishment. Authoritarian parents, on the other hand, are very directive with their children and they value unquestioning obedience from their children. Being detached and less warm than other parents, the authoritarian parents tend to discourage verbal give-and-take with their children and they tend to employ punitive measures to direct their children's behavior. Authoritative parents, however, tend to fall between these extremes. They are characterized as providing clear and firm direction for their children, but this disciplinary clarity is moderated by warmth, reason, flexibility, and verbal give-and-take.

Measurements by Baumrind (e.g., Baumrind & Black, 1967; Baumrind, 1971) of permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting have been based upon interviews with parents and their children as well as observations of parents interacting with their children. In an effort to provide a readily-accessible, standardized measure of Baumrind's parental prototypes, the present article describes a 30-item Likert-type instrument designed to measure the permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting provided by both mothers and fathers.

Phase I: Scale Construction

Method

Procedure. Initially 48 questionnaire items were constructed based upon the descriptions of the permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative prototypes proposed by Baumrind (1971). These items were stated from the point of

view of an individual evaluating the patterns of authority exercised by his or her parents. Consistent with a symbolic interactionist perspective, it was reasoned that the actual parental behavior to which an individual has been exposed will primarily effect that individual to the extent and in the way that he or she has perceived that behavior. Therefore the items in the present instrument were designed to measure the permissiveness, authoritarianism, and authoritativeness of parents, as appraised by their children.

Twenty-one professionals (11 females, 10 males) working in the fields of psychology, social work, sociology, and education were presented the 48 questionnaire items. Each of these professionals was also given verbatim descriptions of the permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative prototypes (Baumrind, 1971, pp. 22-23), and was asked to judge each item according to its accuracy in characterizing permissive parenting, authoritarian parenting, or authoritative parenting. Each of these professionals was encouraged to refrain from categorizing a particular item if he or she judged that it failed to clearly delineate one of these three parental patterns. If greater than 95% of the judges (i.e., at least 20 of the 21 judges) agreed that an item unequivocally represented one of the three parental prototypes, then it was included in a final pool of items.

Results

Thirty-six of the 48 questionnaire items met criterion and were included in the final pool of items. From this pool of 36 items, 10 permissive, 10 authoritarian, and 10 authoritative items were retained for the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ). There was 100% agreement by the judges on over 2/3 of these questionnaire items. Two forms of this questionnaire were

constructed, one to evaluate the parental authority provided by the mother and one to evaluate the authority of the father. The 30 PAQ items pertaining to the father's parental authority are presented in Table 1. Responses to each of these items are made on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). Thus the PAQ yields six separate scores for each participant: mother's permissiveness, mother's authoritarianism, mother's authoritativeness, father's permissiveness, father's authoritarianism, and father's authoritativeness. The scores on each of these variables can range from 10 to 50; the higher the score, then the greater the participant's perceived presence of the parental prototype measured.

Phase II: Reliability Testing

Study I: Test-retest reliability

Method. Students from an introductory psychology class (30 females, 32 males) completed the PAQ at the end of a class period early in the semester. Two weeks later 61 of the original participants (29 females, 32 males) again completed the PAQ at the end of a class period. Following the completion of this latter testing session, the participants were debriefed concerning the purposes of their participation.

Results. The testing sessions over the two-week period yielded the following reliabilities (N = 61, mean age = 19.2 years): r = .81 for mother's permissiveness, r = .86 for mother's authoritarianism, r = .78 for mother's authoritativeness, r = .77 for father's permissiveness, r = .85 for father's authoritarianism, and r = .92 for father's authoritativeness. These reliability coefficients are highly respectable given the fact that there are only

Table 1

Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) Pertaining to Fathers

Instructions: For each of the following statements, circle the number on the 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) that best indicates how that statement applies to you and your father. Try to read and think about each statement as it applies to you and your father during your years of growing up at home. There are no right or wrong answers, so don't spend a lot of time on any one item. We are looking for your overall impression regarding each statement. Be sure not to omit any items.

1. While I was growing up my **father** felt that in a well-run home the children should have their way in the family as often as the parents do.*
2. Even if **his** children didn't agree with **him**, my **father** felt that it was for our own good if we were forced to conform to what **he** thought was right.**
3. Whenever my **father** told me to do something as I was growing up, **he** expected me to do it immediately without asking any questions.**
4. As I was growing up, once family policy had been established, my **father** discussed the reasoning behind the policy with the children in the family.***
5. My **father** has always encouraged verbal give-and-take whenever I have felt that family rules and restrictions were unreasonable.***
6. My **father** has always felt that what children need is to be free to make up their own minds and to do what they want to do, even if this does not agree with what their parents might want.*
7. As I was growing up my **father** did not allow me to question any decision that **he** had made.**
8. As I was growing up my **father** directed the activities and decisions of the children in the family through reasoning and discipline.***
9. My **father** has always felt that more force should be used by parents in order to get their children to behave the way they are supposed to.**
10. As I was growing up my **father** did <u>not</u> feel that I needed to obey rules and regulations of behavior simply because someone in authority had established them.*
11. As I was growing up I knew what my **father** expected of me in my family, but I also felt free to discuss those expectations with my **father** when I felt that they were unreasonable.***
12. My **father** felt that wise parents should teach their children early just who is boss in the family.**
13. As I was growing up, my **father** seldom gave me expectations and guidelines for my behavior.*
14. Most of the time as I was growing up my **father** did what the children in the family wanted when making family decisions.*
15. As the children in my family were growing up, my **father** consistently gave us direction and guidance in rational and objective ways.***
16. As I was growing up my **father** would get very upset if I tried to disagree with **him**.**
17. My **father** feels that most problems in society would be solved if parents would <u>not</u> restrict their children's activities, decisions, and desires as they are growing up.*
18. As I was growing up my **father** let me know what behaviors **he** expected of me, and if I didn't meet those expectations, **he** punished me.**
19. As I was growing up my **father** allowed me to decide most things for myself without a lot of direction from **him**.*
20. As I was growing up my **father** took the children's opinions into consideration when making family decisions, but **he** would not decide for something simply because the children wanted it.***
21. My **father** did <u>not</u> view **himself** as responsible for directing and guiding my behavior as I was growing up.*
22. My **father** had clear standards of behavior for the children in our home as I was growing up, but **he** was willing to adjust those standards to the needs of each of the individual children in the family.***
23. My **father** gave me direction for my behavior and activities as I was growing up and **he** expected me to follow **his** direction, but **he** was always willing to listen to my concerns and to discuss that direction with me.***
24. As I was growing up my **father** allowed me to form my own point of view on family matters and **he** generally allowed me to decide for myself wht I was going to do.*
25. My father has always felt that most problems in society would be solved if we could get parents to strictly and forcibly deal with their children when they don't do what they are supposed to as they are growing up.**
26. As I was growing up my **father** often told me exactly what **he** wanted me to do and how **he** expected me to do it.**
27. As I was growing up my **father** gave me clear direction for my behaviors and activities, but **he** was also understanding when I disagreed with **him**.***.
28. As I was growing up my **father** did <u>not</u> direct the behaviors, activities, and desires of the children in the family.*
29. As I was growing up I knew what my **father** expected of me in the family and **he** insisted that I conform to those expectations simply out of respect for **his** authority.**
30. As I was growing up, if my **father** made a decision in the family that hurt me, **he** was willing to discuss that decision with me and to admit it if **he** had made a mistake.***

<u>Note</u>: The parental pattern represented by each item is denoted by the asterisks--* = permissive, ** = authoritarian, *** = authoritative. Also, a reworded PAQ is used toevaluate the parental authority exercised by the mother.

10 items per scale.

Norms. The means and standard deviations for the permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative scores for the mothers and the fathers are presented in Table 2. These means and standard deviations are based upon the responses of the 61 participants during the initial test-retest session.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Each of the PAQ Scales (N = 61)

	$\bar{X}$	*SD*
Mother's Permissiveness	25.38	5.31
Mother's Authoritarianism	27.20	7.12
Mother's Authoritativeness	36.82	5.12
Father's Permissiveness	23.48	5.64
Father's Authoritarianism	29.03	8.54
Father's Authoritativeness	33.20	8.24

Study II: Internal consistency reliability

Method. The participants were 185 students (95 females, 90 males) who agreed to participate in the study as part of an introductory psychology course requirement. The mean age of these participants was 18.7 years. Following their participation, the subjects were told that their responses would be used to determine specific psychometric measures pertaining to the PAQ.

Results. The following Cronbach (1951) coefficient alpha values were obtained for each of the six PAQ scales: .75 for mother's permissiveness,

.85 for mother's authoritarianism, .82 for mother's authoritativeness, .74 for father's permissiveness, .87 for father's authoritarianism, and .85 for father's authoritativeness.

Phase III: Validity Testing

Study I: Content-related validity

Method. Twenty-one professionals were asked to evaluate an initial pool of 48 questionnaire items based upon their accuracy in characterizing permissiveness, authoritarianism, and authoritativeness. If a particular questionnaire item failed to clearly describe one of these three prototypes of parental authority [based upon Baumrind's (1971) verbatim descriptions], then the judges were instructed to exclude that item from placement in any of the three categories.

Results. A criterion of 95% agreement among the judges was established for the inclusion of a particular questionnaire item in the final pool of potential items for the PAQ. Of the initial 48 items, 36 met criterion; from these 36 items, 10 permissive, 10 authoritarian, and 10 authoritative were selected to comprise the PAQ. Based upon the large amount of agreement among the 21 professionals that the items in the PAQ accurately reflect the constructs of permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting (as defined by Baumrind), we may conclude that the content validity of the PAQ is high.

Study II: Criterion-related validity

Baumrind (1971, 1984) has reported that children of authoritative parents are more independent, self-reliant, responsible, and goal-oriented than are children of permissive or authoritarian parents; furthermore, children of authoritarian parents have displayed particular deficits in these areas. Each

of these characteristics are correlates of self-esteem (see Coopersmith, 1967, 1968; Clemes & Bean, 1981; Gilmore, 1974; Linton & Graham, 1959; Purdey, 1970; Rosenberg, 1965; Weinhold & Hilferty, 1983); therefore if the PAQ provides a valid measure of Baumrind's prototypes, then authoritativeness should positively predict self-esteem, authoritarianism should be inversely related to self-esteem, and permissiveness should not be significantly related to self-esteem.

Method. Buri, Louiselle, Misukanis, and Mueller (1988) asked 230 college students (mean age = 19.3 years) to participate in the study as part of an introductory psychology course requirement. Each participant agreed to complete the PAQ and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (Fitts, 1965).

Results. As hypothesized, Buri et al. (1988) reported the following bivariate correlations of parental authority with self-esteem: r = +.41 (p < .0005) for mother's authoritativeness, r = +.38 (p < .0005) for father's authoritativeness, r = -.26 (p < .0005) for mother's authoritarianism, r = -.18 (p < .005) for father's authoritarianism, r = -.04 (p > .10) for mother's permissiveness, and r = -.08 (p > .10) for father's permissiveness.

Study III: Criterion-related validity

One important dimension of Baumrind's authority prototypes which was not explicitly mentioned in the verbatim descriptions of each is parental warmth or parental nurturance. Since this particular dimension was not discussed in the verbatim descriptions, the 21 professionals who judged the appropriateness of each PAQ item for inclusion in the questionnaire were not able to take parental nurturance into consideration when making their judgments. Therefore, if the PAQ is a valid measure of Baumrind's prototypes, then parental

authoritativeness should be positively related to parental nurturance, parental authoritarianism should be negatively related to parental nurturance, and parental permissiveness should not be significantly related to parental nurturance.

Method. Buri, Misukanis, and Mueller (1988) presented a 24-item Parental Nurturance Scale. Test-retest reliabilities reported for this scale were .92 for mother's nurturance and .94 for father's nurturance. Cronbach's (1951) coefficient alpha values were .95 for mother's nurturance and .93 for father's nurturance. In the present study, 127 college students were asked to complete the PAQ and the Parental Nurturance Scale as part of an introductory psychology course requirement.

Results. Consistent with Baumrind's suggestions for the relationship between parental authority and parental warmth, the following bivariate correlations between the PAQ scores and the parental nurturance scores were obtained: the authoritative parents were found to be highest in parental nurturance for both mothers (r = +.56, p < .0005) and fathers (r = +.68, p < .0005); authoritarian parenting was inversely related to nurturance for both mothers (r = -.36, p < .0005) and for fathers (r = -.53, p < .0005); and parental permissiveness was unrelated to nurturance for both mothers (r = +.04) and fathers (r = +.13). These results confirm that parental warmth is a dimension of parental authority that is inherent in the PAQ measurements.

Study IV: Discriminant-related validity

If the permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative scales of the PAQ provide an accurate measurement of Baumrind's three parental prototypes, then one would expect divergent responses to the items from these three scales.

Method. The participants in the present study were 127 college students who completed the PAQ in order to fulfill a portion of an introductory psychology course requirement.

Results. As the results in Table 3 demonstrate, the responses of the 127 participants indicated the hypothesized divergence in PAQ scores. Mother's authoritarianism was inversely related to mother's permissiveness (r = -.38, p < .0005) and to mother's authoritativeness (r = -.48, p < .0005). Similarly,

Table 3

Intercorrelations of PAQ Scores for Mothers and Fathers

	1	2	3
1. Mother's Permissiveness	1.00		
2. Mother's Authoritarianism	-.38***	1.00	
3. Mother's Authoritativeness	+.07	-.48***	1.00
	4	5	6
4. Father's Permissiveness	1.00		
5. Father's Authoritarianism	-.50***	1.00	
6. Father's Authoritativeness	+.12	-.52***	1.00

***p < .0005

father's authoritarianism was inversely related to father's permissiveness (r = -.50, p < .0005) and to father's authoritativeness (r = -.52, p < .0005). Also, mother's permissiveness was not significantly related to mothers' authoritativeness (r = +.07) nor was father's permissiveness significantly cor-

related with father's authoritativeness (r = +.12).

Study V: Correlations with Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale

On the face of it, the PAQ may be vulnerable to response biases. For example, agreement with the authoritative items and non-agreement with the authoritarian items may be perceived as socially desirable responses. If the PAQ is to be a useful measure of parental authority prototypes, then responses to the PAQ items should be free of such response biases.

Method. Students from an introductory psychology class (N = 69) completed the PAQ and the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964) at the end of a class period.

Results. The following bivariate correlations between the PAQ scores and the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale score were obtained: r = +.23 for mother's permissiveness, r = -.14 for mother's authoritarianism, r = +.10 for mother's authoritativeness, r = +.10 for father's permissiveness, r = +.01 for father's authoritarianism, and r = +.05 for father's authoritativeness. None of these values were statistically significant; therefore the PAQ does not appear to be vulnerable to social desirability response biases.

Conclusions

The PAQ has demonstrated highly respectable measures of reliability and validity. It is useful for assessing the parental authority exercised by both mothers and fathers and it is appropriate for both females and males who are older adolescents or young adults. Its potential as a research tool in the investigation of individual correlates of parental permissiveness, authoritarianism, and authoritativeness is promising.

References

Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology Monographs, 4* (2, Pt. 2).

Baumrind, D. (1984). Reciprocal rights and responsibilities in parent-child relations. In J. Rubinstein & B. D. Slife (Eds.), *Taking sides on controversial issues* (pp. 237-244). Guilford, CO: Dushkin.

Baumrind, D., & Black, A. E. (1967). Socialization practices associated with dimensions of competence in preschool boys and girls. *Child Development, 38*, 291-327.

Buri, J. R., Louiselle, P. A., Misukanis, T. M., & Mueller, R. A. (1988). Effects of parental authoritarianism and authoritativeness on self-esteem. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 14*, 271-282.

Buri, J. R., Misukanis, T. M., & Mueller, R. A. (1988). *"Nothing I ever do seems to please my parents": Female and male self-esteem as a function of mother's and father's nurturance.* ERIC/CAPS Document ED 285 114 (Resources in Education, January).

Clemes, H., & Bean, R. (1981). *Self-esteem: The key to your child's well-being.* New York: G. P. Putnam.

Coopersmith, S. (1967). *The antecedents of self-esteem.* San Francisco: Freeman Press.

Coopersmith, S. (1968). Studies in self-esteem. *Scientific American, 218*, 96-106.

Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika, 16*, 297-334.

Crowne, D. P., & Marlowe, D. (1964). *The approval motive.* New York: Wiley.

Dobson, J. (1970). *Dare to discipline.* Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House.

Dorr, D., Zax, M., & Bonner, J. W. (Eds.). (1983). *The psychology of discipline*. New York: International Universities Press.

Farson, R. (1984). Birthrights. In J. Rubinstein & B. D. Slife (Eds.), *Taking sides on controversial issues* (pp. 230-236). Guilford, CO: Dushkin.

Fitts, W. H. (1965). *Tennessee Self-Concept Scale*. Los Angeles: Western Psychological Services.

Gilmore, J. V. (1974). *The productive personality*. San Francisco: Albion.

Gordon, T. (1975). *Parent effectiveness training*. New York: New American Library.

Linton, H., & Graham, E. (1959). Personality correlates of persuasibility. In C. Hovland & I. Janis (Eds.), *Personality and persuasibility* (pp. 69-101). New Haven, CO: Yale University Press.

Neill, A. S. (1977). *Summerhill: A radical approach to child rearing*. New York: Pocket Books.

Purdey, W. W. (1970). *Self-concept and school achievement*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Weinhold, B. K., & Hilferty, J. (1983). The self-esteem matrix: A tool for elementary counselors. *Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, 17*, 243-251.